

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:274
ANSWERED ON:24.02.2010
ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION
Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether widening of national highways have resulted in the environmental degradation across the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that these national highways do not bisect any wildlife sanctuaries?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) & (b) New Highways and Widening of National Highways greater than 30 KM, involving additional right of way greater than 20m, involving land acquisitions and passing through more than one State requires Environmental Clearance under Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 as amended in 2009. The Environmental Clearance to such projects are issued incorporating various conditions on Environmental Mitigative measures as recommended by the Expert Appraisal Committee after examination of the Environment Impact Assessment report, Environment Management Plan etc.

(c) Generally, laying of new highways through protected areas are not encouraged. Whenever, any proposal of new highway or widening of existing highway is recommended, the project proponents are required to incorporate detailed mitigative measures like providing underpasses/overpasses at regular intervals for wildlife movement, speed breakers for maintaining low speed, etc. In this connection, the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, has issued detailed guidelines for mitigation of negative impacts of such activities.